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President's Message



I have to admit, I have been struggling with what to write for this particular President's message. Finding inspiration has eluded me. The cold blustery days of winter, the never ending stresses in our health care system, the feeling of never having enough time to complete the work on my desk has taken its toll. That is until my eyes were opened and I was reminded about why I chose not just nursing but specifically perioperative nursing as a career. The source of my new-found inspiration arrived in my Operating Room with enthusiasm, boundless energy, and a notebook full of questions in the form of a 4th year student nurse! The daily grind seems to have an uncanny ability to make us numb or less sensitive to the importance of what we do for our patients. Sometimes we need a reminder of where we all started – if only to snap us out of that numbness – and there is no better reminder than daily contact with a student!

So here is this 4th year student on her first day of her 6 week senior practicum rotation – one that she specifically requested. Little did she know that her presence would both inspire and ignite the staff. She brought with her a desire to learn and an enthusiasm for the profession... and as a result motivated the staff, myself included, to teach and to show off the perioperative world.

The pride and passion of being a perioperative nurse was at an all time high. Even the “old dogs” – the veterans of the OR – perked up and took this young student under their wings. I would even go so far as to say that we all felt possessive of, and responsible for, the goal of providing her with a comprehensive learning opportunity for her. We recognized that we had a potential future perioperative nurse in the making! What better way to pass on the torch than to open our doors and nurture the skills this young nurse was developing.

Certain events happened over the course of her rotation that cemented my faith in my fellow colleagues and my belief that

perioperative nursing will always be my first love. Probably the most amusing was the voracity and determination of the staff to not allow any of the surgeons to diminish or deter the student's gusto!! Despite the typical pressures of the operating room environment, there was no chance the staff were going to allow for any bullying or any intimidation. And we realized that we should practice what we preach on a daily basis – we need to advocate for each other as well as for our patients!!! In the end, everyone – nurse, physician, and ancillary staff accepted the assignment of mentoring with the utmost importance. In the end it is possible that we “old dogs” benefited the most!

It's not that we haven't had students in our OR before....we are typically on the radar for student placement for a post basic operating room program in our province. Perhaps we were just due for a reminder that we need to embrace the student nurses... they are our future after all – and it seems they have a lot to teach as well as to learn! 🍁

Linda M. Socha, RN, BSN, RNFA, CPN(C), CEBT, CTBS, is President of the Operating Room Nurses Association of Canada. She is Clinical Nurse Educator for the OR at Saskatoon City Hospital and the past Chair of the ORNAC Editorial Committee.